

The Slosberg Report

2021 LEGISLATIVE SESSION UPDATE

Dear Friend,

Last Friday marked the end of Florida's 2021 Legislative Session, and what a busy session it was!

I won't sugarcoat it, this session was rough. From attacks on our environment, the right to vote, the freedom to protest, and trans kids, we fought battle after battle to protect the most vulnerable Floridians, protect home rule, and bring relief to our community as we begin to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic.

While I have spent the last few months working in the Capitol on new legislation and fighting for the interests of House District 91, I am happy to be back in the district to serve my constituents.

The Legislature will be back in Tallahassee the week of May 17th for a special session focused on Florida's Gambling Compact. In the meantime, I wanted to update you on some of the legislation passed during this session.

Sincerely,



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THE GOOD

HB 673: DNA Evidence Collected in Sexual Offense Investigations

HB 673 creates “Gail’s Law,” requiring FDLE to establish a statewide database to track sexual assault kits through the criminal justice process and to notify victims with updates on the status of their cases.

I was proud to sponsor this important bill, which was named in honor of the dedicated advocacy of Ms. Gail Gardner, an Orlando woman who survived a vicious sexual assault in 1988 by an armed man who broke into her home and raped her at knifepoint.

SB 184: Purple Alert

Requires FDLE to establish a “Purple Alert” to aid in the search for missing adults with mental or cognitive disabilities whose disappearance poses a credible threat of immediate danger or serious bodily harm, who can’t be returned without law enforcement intervention, and who don’t qualify for Silver Alert activation.

HB 1189: Victims of Sexual Offenses

This bill requires every county health department in Florida to participate in the sexual assault response team (SART) and provides guidelines and requirements for SARTs. It also requires the Criminal Justice Standards and Training Commission to set minimum standards and required training for law enforcement officers on how to respond to sexual assault cases.

HB 7051: Law Enforcement and Correctional Officer Practices

HB 7051 requires the Criminal Justice Standards & Training Commission to develop training standards for use of force by law enforcement officers and standards for investigating officer use of force. It also requires more transparency in law enforcement job applications and prohibits arrests of children under 7, unless the child commits a forcible felony.

SB 50: Taxation

This bill updates and modernizes Florida's sales tax law to include online marketplace providers, online marketplace sellers, and online retailers, who were not previously paying sales tax like brick and mortar businesses. SB 50 is a huge step in the right direction for our state and it will generate over a billion dollars a year in new revenue.

SB 1120: Telephone Solicitation

SB 1120 prohibits telephone sales calls to be made without the prior express written consent of the person called and creates a criminal penalty for certain unlawful commercial phone calls. This bill is designed to cut down on the number of nuisance "spam" calls that we all receive.

HB 1079: Agency Contracts for Commodities and Contractual Services

HB 1079 creates provisions for the evaluation, management and oversight of all state agency contracts for commodities and contractual services. This bill was filed in response to the unmitigated disaster with Florida's unemployment system, CONNECT, which was not built correctly by the vendor selected for the job. HB 1079 will establish accountability measures for the state contracting process and create a list of suspended vendors disqualified from bidding on or renewing state contracts

Appropriations for House District 91

This year, two of my appropriations projects were funded in the final state budget sent to Governor DeSantis. **HB 2093, Jewish Transportation - Rales Rides**, was funded and will help support the operations of Ruth & Norman Rales Jewish Family Services' Rales Rides program, which provides transportation services to seniors in the South Palm Beach County area.

My other appropriations project, **HB 3551, Jordan Avi Ogman Foundation TECPR2 Research & Development of Gene Therapy Cure for Rare Neurodegenerative Disease**, was fully funded in the final budget. This appropriation will go to researching and developing a cure for rare neurodegenerative diseases that affect Jewish communities.

THE BAD

HB 1: Combating Public Disorder

HB 1 targeted peaceful demonstrations through a combination of creating new crimes, escalating criminal and financial penalties, and overriding local law enforcement decisions. This bad bill, a priority for Governor DeSantis, is an explicit response to the peaceful protests that happened across our country last summer in response to incidents of police brutality.

SB 1028: Charter Schools

SB 1028 is a massive expansion of charter schools in our state. This bill consolidates the existing 5 state scholarship programs into just two scholarship programs. These programs sap money away from traditional public schools by increasing the amount of money going to unaccountable charter schools.

Additionally, this bad bill targets transgender students and specifically bans them from participating in school sports. It will also remove transgender athletes from school sports teams that they currently play on.

SB 90: Election Administration

SB 90 creates unnecessary, detrimental reforms to Florida's election laws. As passed, it will restrict voting access, disenfranchise voters, dramatically increase election-related costs, and hinder timely certification of election results. Additionally, this bad bill restricts access to ballot drop boxes and will suppress voters across our state.

Florida's Supervisors of Elections and various advocacy groups oppose many of these reforms. While proponents argue that the bill increases election security and transparency, there is no evidence that Florida's current VBM system or use of secure drop boxes has led to widespread voter fraud. In fact, after the 2020 general election, state officials praised Florida's current elections process as the "gold standard." This bill is a solution in search of a problem.

SB 7072: Social Media Platforms

SB 7072 creates requirements that effectively moderate the content of large scale social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook and set standards for how they are allowed to regulate user-generated content. This bad bill violates the constitutional rights of private companies in favor of the speech of other parties who believe that they have been unfairly censored.

HB 403: Home-Based Businesses

HB 403 creates an authorization in state law for home-based businesses and prevents local governments from enacting or enforcing any law or policy, or taking any action, to license or regulate those home-based businesses in a manner that is different from other local businesses. This bill does not do enough to protect our neighborhoods from unregulated businesses operating out of the house next door and ties the hands of local governments who are better suited to address these issues.

HB 919: Preemption Over Restriction of Utility Services

HB 919 prevents local governments from restricting or prohibiting the types or fuel sources of energy production which may be used, delivered, converted or supplied to serve utility customers. This bad bill is an overly broad preemption that is designed to prohibit local governments from relying on alternative energy solutions, like solar power, to generate energy for customers.

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